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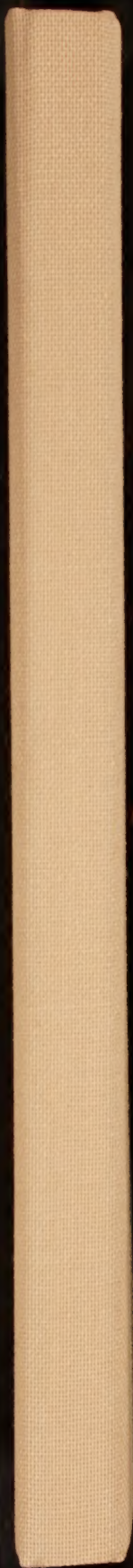
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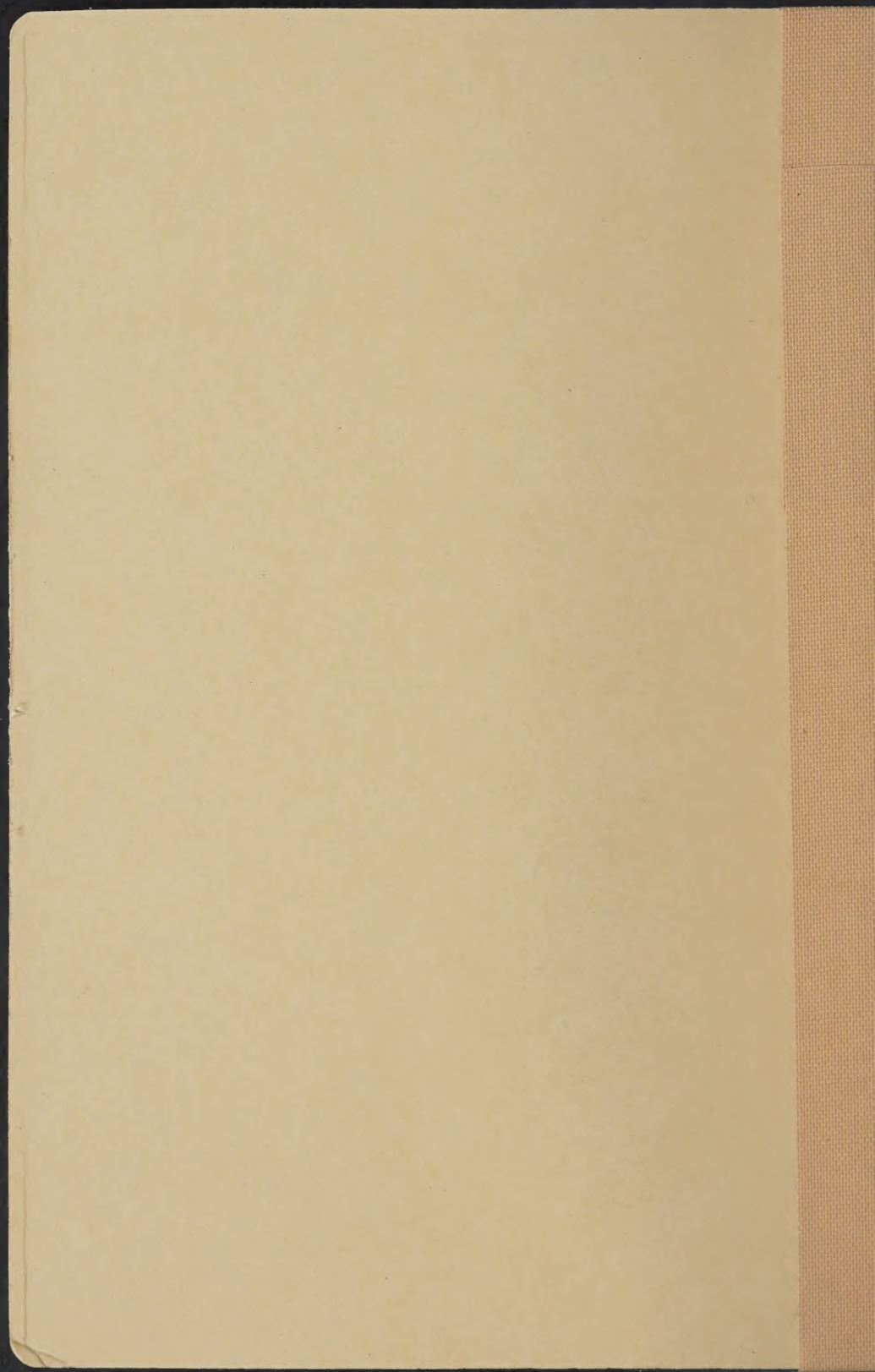
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CHEVY-CHASE,

With a PREFACE

Endeavouring to prove that the AUTHOR intended
the Earl of DOUGLASS for his HERO; and
NOTES on some Passages of the POEM.

To which is subjoined,

HARDYKNUTE:

A

FRAGMENT.

Being the first CANTO of an EPIC POEM, with
NOTES.

ABERDEEN:

Printed and sold by F. DOUGLASS and W. MURRAY.
M,DCC,LIV.

CHIEF VY-CHAS

THE PREFACE

The author has to prove that the Author intended
the End of the Poem; and
NOTES on the Language of the Poem.

TO THE READER

HARDY KNUTE

FRAGMENT

THE END OF THE POEM
NOTES

W. R. D. E. V.

W. R. D. E. V. and W. M. R. E. V.

W. R. D. E. V.

P R E F A C E.

SIR Philip Sidney, Ben. Johnson, and Mr. Addison, names, whose approbation would do honour to any performance, were profess'd admirers of the following poem. The first says, 'That he never heard the Old Song of Piercy and Douglass, that his heart was not more moved than with a trumpet.' The second, 'That he had rather have been the author of it than of all his works:' and the last wrote a criticism to point out its beauties; which makes the 70th and 74th numbers of the Spectator.

THIS poem is supposed to have been wrote during the reign of King Henry IV. of England, who was contemporary with our Robert III. and it is generally believed, tho' with little probability, that the author took the hint of his design from the personal combat between Douglass and Piercy, a few days before the battle of Otterburn*: whatever may be in that, it is certain that the circumstances are entirely fictitious, at least they are unsupported by Scots or English history.

'Tis impossible to determine with certainty, at this distance of time, who was the author, whether a Scots or an Englishman: for in such an inquiry,

* Fought in the year 1388.

we would have no light to guide us but what we could draw from the poem itself. A prejudice in favour of their country, is a thing more or less obvious in all authors; a man cannot well be supposed indifferent to the place which gave him birth; he is obliged to do justice to all the world, but may be well excused tho' he dwell a little longer upon, and endeavour to set the virtues of his own countrymen in a stronger light. If then it be made appear, that the author of the following poem is remarkably attentive to every circumstance that might tend to impress the reader's mind with a favourable opinion of the Scots, it will from thence appear a very natural conclusion, that he himself was a Scotfman.

THAT the author really seems to favour the Scots, and that Douglass was intended by him as the hero of the poem, we hope will appear extremely probable from the following circumstances.

THE ground of the quarrel is declared to have been a rash vow of Lord Piercy's, to hunt three days in the Scottish woods, and as appears by the sequel, on Douglass's lands*. Tho' it does not appear that the English gave the Scots Earl the least intimation of such a design, yet we are informed it soon came to the ears of the latter, who with reason, sent Lord Piercy notice to desist from his

* Vide stanza 18th.

P R E F A C E.

v

purpose: this message had not the desired effect; that haughty Lord paid no regard to 'it, and both parties prepared for battle: Piercy, who had fixed a certain day for taking his pleasure in the Scottish woods, very religiously kept his tryst, was first in the field, and without ceremony killed a great many of Douglass's deer: at last these Lords met, each on the head of his dependants: how soon the Scots came in view, Piercy orders his men to prepare for the onset: how different is Douglass's behaviour! tho' the person injur'd, he seems willing to take away the quarrel by a friendly communing; nor does he take fire till Piercy outbraves him to his face; and even then, has the humanity and greatness of soul to propose deciding their differences by single combat, that the innocent dependants of both might be saved.

PIERCY readily agreed to that proposal, but the unhappy bravery of Withrington spoiled all, and the battle began. Those two Lords met soon after, and a terrible conflict ensued; in which however, the author plainly insinuates that Douglass either had, or was soon like to have the better of Piercy, he desires him to yield and become his prisoner, not with contumelious language, but in the genteelest manner: he acknowledges his bravery, offers to do him good offices with the King his master, and even to pay his ransom. The man who had the

courage to propose a single combat, cannot be supposed capable of making such an overture, but from a full conviction of his superior skill and success in fight, and a generous regard for a brave tho' unequal adversary. This conjecture seems the more probable from Piercy's answer, which shows that he was then in a very bad humour *. What the arm of the great Piercy could not effect, the arrow of a common fellow too fatally accomplished! Full of these generous sentiments, the brave Earl Douglass receives a mortal wound! Mr. Addison supposes these overtures to have been made, and Douglass to have been killed during a parley: if he was, sure the author meant no compliment to the English by making them kill this brave generous man, at the very moment he was endeavouring to prevent the further effusion of their blood, while he trusted to their honour, and the laws of arms.

THE author has not only distinguished Douglass by several circumstances peculiarly favourable, while alive, but just after the account of his death and Piercy's truly generous lamentation over him, he gives us four stanzas perhaps the most animated of the whole poem †, the reader can't help observing their force and energy: one thinks he sees Sir Hugh Montgomery, fiercely breaking through the English, bear-

* Vide stanza 35th.

† Vide stanza 40, 41, 42, 43.

ing down every thing before him, and plunging his spear in Piercy's breast: and here let it be observed, that this is the only brave action particularly described in the whole poem: for tho' the English archers who killed Douglass and Montgomery, may be allowed to have been good marksmen, it does not appear that any of them ventured a foot beyond his rank, or gave the least indication of an extraordinary bravery. Perhaps the account given of Withrington in the following stanza, may be opposed by some to that given of Sir Hugh Montgomery.

For Withrington I needs must wail,
As one in doleful dumps;
For *when his legs were smitten off,*
He fought upon his stumps.

But it seems not improbable, that here the author meant to ridicule this hot-headed squire, who seemed so over fond of fighting, as not to allow his master to decide his own quarrel upon equal terms. Had he favoured him, he would have taken care to distinguish him by some particular brave exploit, instead of bestowing upon him, such general, such improbable praise; but tho' it were granted, that by this over-strained hyperbole he meant him a compliment, still it must be allowed that he paints Sir Hugh in a stronger light; and by being so circumstantial, obliges the reader to follow him with his eye from

the moment he quits his rank to revenge Douglass's death, till he sees Piercie dead at his feet.

It was Mr. Addison's opinion, that the author was an Englishman, and that Piercy was the hero of the poem. I'm sorry I should be obliged to differ from so great a man, but must beg leave to mention and make a few remarks upon the reasons which he adduces for supporting these facts; which are: That the author makes the English the first who take the field, and the last who quit it;—the English bring only 1500 to the field, the Scots 2000,—the English keep the field with 53, the Scots retire with 55.—But what he chiefly founds on, is the different manner in which the Scots and English Kings received the news of the battle, and of the great mens death who commanded in it. The Scots King is extremely concerned for Douglass's death, and declares that he had not in his realm another Captain of such account.—The King of England makes himself very easy under the loss of Piercy, and says, he trusts he has in his kingdom five hundred as good.

EVERY one of these circumstances, except Piercy's first taking the field, are the reverse in the Scots editions of this poem: till therefore it be made appear that the English editions are the true reading, any argument drawn from these passages must be inconclusive. But lest this should be thought rather

an evasion, than a solution of the point in question, I shall beg the reader's leave to take more particular notice of the two circumstances Mr. Addison lays most stress upon, *viz.* That of the English first taking the field, and the different reception the accounts of the fight met with at the Scots and English courts.

WITH regard to the first, as the author has not insinuated the smallest provocation on the part of Douglass, to vindicate so gross an encroachment of Piercy upon his property, we may fairly conclude he design'd the former for the hero of his poem: nor can it well be imagined that he intended any compliment to the English, by making them first take the field in such a cause.

MR. Addison thinks the author's design in writing the poem, was to shew the fatal consequences of such deadly feuds between noblemen; and indeed the last stanza makes it abundantly evident that he had such a moral view. If he then thought such quarrels immoral, and of dangerous consequence to society, certainly he must have had a bad opinion of the aggressors: as he makes Piercy the aggressor, and only calls forth Douglass to vindicate his undoubted right, as the former is represented obstinate, and determined without the least shadow of reason, and the latter, tho' on the most allowable occasion, extremely unwilling to shed human blood,

let the unprejudiced reader say which of the two bids fairest for being his favourite. Homer, who founds his poem of the *Illiad* upon the anger of Achilles, takes care to assign as the cause of it, the injustice done him by Agamemnon. Tho' wicked custom, and the villainy of some writers have agreed to sanctify the encroachments of princes upon the rights of mankind, no man has ever had the boldness to vindicate the usurpation of one private man upon the rights of another.

WITH regard to the manner in which the news of this fight was received by the King of Scotland, altho' we allow that (according to the English editions) he said, he had not in his realm another Captain of such account as Douglass, what do the words amount to further than a compliment to that great man's memory, (which by the by would have been literally true, if the author had in view the Earl of Douglass, who fought the combat with Lord Piercy at Otterburn) does not this shew him ready to do justice to merit. Could an author do greater honour to the most beloved hero, than thus to make a great King lament his death, and publicly appeal to his whole kingdom for the eminence of his character?

AND if we suppose (with the English editions) that the King of England, on hearing of Piercy's death, said, he trusted he had in his kingdom five

hundred as good, it will follow, either that this Lord had no extraordinary merit, or that his Prince did injustice to his memory; neither of these seem very favourable to the opinion of Piercy's being the hero, or the author's being an Englishman. But it is of the less importance whether the Scots or English editions be genuine as to these facts, as it will readily be allowed that any of the Kings were capable of a generous concern, or a vain boast.

THE English editions make their King threaten to be revenged on Scotland for Piercy's death; and add, that he afterwards made good that threat, at a place called Humble Down: but this is an obvious interpolation, and no part of the original performance; for the scene is laid in the reign of one of the James's, and the battle of Humble Down was fought in the year 1401, about eight years before the first of that name succeeded to his father King Robert III.—We cannot suppose the author would have fallen into so gross a blunder.

PERHAPS some may imagine, that the language is the strongest argument of all against its being a Scots production, since it must be allowed to be much better than what was spoken or written in this kingdom at the time this is supposed to have been written; but it may be observed, that its present style scarce differs more from the Scots, than from the English language of that period, as any one may

fee by looking into Chaucer, who wrote much about the same time: and it is very natural to think, that it has been put in its present dress towards the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign; certainly not before, for I'm persuaded had so good a judge of style as Sir Philip Sidney seen it as now printed, he would not have pass'd so severe a censure upon the language. It will be allowed that the versification in several of the stanzas is harmonious; and that the style in general, excepting some old words, is good, at least, not inferior to some of a much latter date.

CHEVY-CHASE.

I.

GOD prosper long our noble King,
Our lives and safeties all,
A woful hunting once there did,
In Chevy-chase befall.

II.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Piercy took his way,
The child may rue that was unborn,
The hunting of that day.

III.

The stout Earl of Northumberland,
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods,
Three summer days to take,

IV.

The choicest harts in Chevy-chase,
To kill and bear away:
These tidings to Earl Douglass came,
In Scotland where he lay,

V.

Who sent Earl Piercy present word,
He would prevent the sport,
The English Earl not fearing this,
Did to the woods resort,

VI.

With twenty hundred Bow-men bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need,
To aim their shafts aright.

VII.

The gallant gray hounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer;
On Monday they began to hunt,
When day light did appear,

VIII.

And long before High-noon they had,
An hundred fat bucks slain;
Then having din'd the drovers went,
To rouse them up again.

IX.

The bow-men mustered in the hills,
Well able to endure;
The back sides all with special care,
That day were guarded sure.

X

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods,
The nimble deer to take;
And with their cries the hills and dales,
An echo shrill did make.

XI.

Lord Piercy to the quarry went,
To view the tender deer,

Quoth he, Earl Douglafs promised,
This day to meet me here (a),

XII.

But if I thought he would not come,
No longer would I ftay :

With that a brave young gentleman,
Thus to the Earl did fay,

XIII.

Lo yonder doth Earl Douglafs come,
His men in armour bright,
Full fifteen hundred Scottifh fpears,
All marching in our fight ;

XIV.

All pleafant men of Teviotdale,
Faft by the river Tweed :
Then ceafe your fport Earl Piercy faid,
And take your bows with fpeed.

XV.

And now with me my country-men,
Your courage forth advance ;
For never was there champion yet,
In Scotland or in France (b),

(a) When Douglafs fent the meffage to Piercy defiring him to defift from this hunting, the latter feems to have fent him a challenge to meet him on a certain day, the accepting of which, feems to be the promife here mentioned.

(b) Piercy by joining Scotland and France together, very artfully endeavours to inflame his men, and feems to hint

XVI.

That ever did on horse-back come,
 But if my hap it were,
 I durst encounter man for man,
 With him to break a spear.

XVII.

Earl Douglass on a milk white steed,
 Most like a Baron bold;
 Rode foremost of the company,
 Whose armour shone like gold,

XVIII.

Shew me said he, whose men you be,
 That hunt so boldly here;
 Or without my consent do chase,
 And kill my fallow deer.

XIX.

The man that first did answer make
 Was noble Percy he;
 Who said we list not to declare,
 Nor show whose men we be;

XX.

Yet we will spend our dearest blood,
 The choicest harts to slay (c),

indirectly, at the animosity that had long subsisted betwixt England and these nations.

(c) The reader will observe, that Percy declines entering into any dispute with regard to the property of the game.---. Perhaps his opinion of property in creatures bred in the

Then Douglass swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say,

XXI.

E'er thus I will out-braved be,
One of us two shall die ;
I know thee well an Earl thou art
Lord Piercy so am I (d).

XXII.

But trust me Piercy pity it were
And great offence to kill ;
Any of these our guiltless men,
For they have done no ill.

XXIII.

Let thou and I the battle try,
And set our men aside ;
Accurst be he Lord Piercy said,
By whom it is deny'd.

C

fields, has been of a piece with that of some wild Highlanders ; they are men of strick honour, hate a thief, and would not rob a man of a shilling. But make no scruple of driving off whole herds of cattle from the mountains, nay he's the bravest fellow that can catch the greatest number.

(d) Mr. Addison thinks, that Douglass by mentioning his own and Piercy's quality, intended to shew him that he could have no pretence for refusing the combat, perhaps he might have had that in view, but in my humble opinion he chiefly intended to aggravate the injustice of this bold invasion of his property, by telling him that the person whom he injur'd was of the same quality with himself.

XXIV.

Then slept a gallant squire forth,
 Witherington was his name,
 Who said I would not have it told',
 To Henry our King for shame,

XXV.

That e'er my Captain fought on foot,
 And I stood looking on ;
 You two be Lords said Witherington,
 And I a Squire alone,

XXVI.

I'll do the best that I may do,
 While I have pow'r to stand ;
 While I have pow'r to weild a sword,
 I'll fight with heart and hand.

XXVII.

Our Scottish archers bent their bows (e),
 Their hearts were good and true,
 At the first flight of arrows sent,
 They four score English slew.

(e) 'Tis very natural to think that this speech of Witherington would inflame the breasts of the Scots archers, they seem to have made no objection to the combat between the two chiefs; but to hear a private man on the other side talk so contemptuously of the proposed inaction of the troops, was what they could not bear; and this perhaps is the best reason that can be assign'd for their pouring a shower of arows upon the English without waiting for the word of command.

XXVIII.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Douglass bade on the bent:
A Captain mov'd with meikle pride
The spears to shivers sent.

XXIX.

They clos'd full fast on ev'ry side,
No slackness there was found;
And many a gallant gentleman,
Lay gasping on the ground,

XXX.

Oh Christ! it was great grief to see,
And likewise for to hear;
The cries of men lying in their gore,
And scatt'ered here and there.

XXXI.

At last these two stout Lords did meet,
Like Captains of great might;
Like lions mov'd they laid on load,
And made a cruel fight.

XXXII.

They fought until they both did sweat,
With swords of temper'd steel;
Until the blood like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel.

XXXIII.

Yeild the Lord Percy, Douglass said,
In faith I will thee bring;

Where thou shalt high advanced be,
By James our Scottish King (f).

XXXIV.

Thy ransom I will freely give,
And thus report of thee;
Thou art the most courageous Knight,
That ever I did see.

XXXV.

No Douglass, quoth Lord Piercie then
Thy proffers I do scorn;
I will not yield to any Scot,
That ever yet was born.

XXXVI.

With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an English bow;
Which struck Earl douglass to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow;

(f) It is plain from this stanza that tho' the Author might have taken the hint of his design from the battle of Otterburn, the scene is laid in an after period, for Otterburn was fought in the time of Robert II. near twenty years before King James I. came to the throne-----nor does the place agree to this, for that battle was fought within nine miles of Newcastle, a great way to the Southward of the Chiviot-hills.

XXXVII.

Who never spake more words then these,
Fight on my merry men all,
For now my life is at an end,
Lord Piercy sees my fall (g).

XXXVIII.

Then leaving life, Lord Piercy took (h),
The dead man by the hand,
And said, Earl Douglass for thy life,
Would I had lost my land.

(g) I'm extremely sorry to find Mr. Addison of opinion that Douglass by these words meant to excite his men to revenge his death upon the English; so brave, so generous a Hero must have been influenced by nobler motives, the honour of his country, the safety of his followers now deprived of his powerful protection, were sufficient reasons for this necessary injunction, setting aside this vile principle.

(h) Mr. Addison very justly observes that the sentiment in this passage is generous and beautiful; here the amiable character of Douglass shines out in its full lustre; Piercy hitherto blinded by an unbounded ambition, deaf to the nobler sentiments of justice and humanity, at last sees his error, and passionately laments the fatal consequence of his ungovernable passions: he sees a great and good man falling in the just defence of his own property, and in the near view of death expressing a noble concern for the honour of his country! sees him fall by the hand of a wretch he had generously endeavoured to save: stung with the keenest remorse for the part he had acted, he bewails his adversary and entirely abandons the necessary care of his own person.

XXXIX.

O Christ! my very heart doth bleed,
With sorrow for thy sake;
For sure a more renowned Knight,
Mischance did never take.

XL.

A Knight among the Scots there was,
Who saw Earl Douglass die;
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge,
Upon the Earl Piercy.

XLI.

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd,
Who with a spear full bright;
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
Rode fiercely through the fight.

XLII.

He past the English archers all,
Without all dread or fear;
And through Earl Piercy's body then,
He thrust his sharp edg'd spear.

XLIII.

With such a veh'ment force and might,
His body he did gore;
The spear went thro' the other side,
A long cloth-yard and more.

XLIV.

So thus did both these nobles die
Whose courage none could stain,

An English archer then perceiv'd,
Their noble Lord was slain.

XLV.

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree
An arrow of a cloth-yard length,
Unto the head drew he.

XLVI.

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery then,
So right his shaft he fet,
The gray goose-wing that was thercon
In his heart's blood was wet.

XLVII.

The fight did last from break of day,
Till setting of the sun :
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battle scarce was done.

XLVIII.

With the Lord Piercie there was slain,
Sir John of Ogerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff and Sir John,
Sir James that bold Baron.

XLIX.

Sir George also, and good Sir James,
Both Knights of good account ;
Good Sir Ralph Rabby there was slain,
Whose power did surmount.

L.

For Witherington I needs must wail,
As one in doleful dumps ;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

LI.

And with Earl Douglass there was slain,
Sir Hugh Montgomery ;
Sir Charles Murray that from the field,
One foot would never flee ;

LII.

Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliff too,
His sister's son was he.
Sir David Lamb so well esteem'd,
Yet saved could not be ;

LIII.

And the Lord Maxwell in likewise,
Did for Earl Douglass die.
Of fifteen hundred Scottish spears,
Went home but fifty-three ;

LIV.

Of twenty hundred English men,
Scarce fifty-five did flee.
The rest were slain in Chevy-Chase,
Under the Green Wood Tree :

LV.

Next day did many widows come,
Their husbands to bewail ;

They wash'd their wounds in brinish tears,
But all could not prevail.

LVI.

Their bodies bath'd in purple blood,
They bore with them away ;
They kiss'd them dead a thousand times,
When they were clad in clay.

LVII.

This news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's King did reign ;
That brave Earl Douglass suddenly,
Was with an arrow slain.

LVIII.

Then God be with him said our King,
Sith 'twill no better be ;
I trust I have in my realm,
Five hundred as good as he.

LIX.

Like tidings to King Henry came,
Within as short a space.
That Piercy of Northumberland,
Was slain in Chevy-Chafe.

LX.

O heavy news King Henry said,
England can witness be ;
I have not any Captain more,
Of such account as he.

LXI.

And of the rest of small account,
Did many hundreds die ;
Thus ended the hunting of Chevy-Chase,
Made by the Earl Piercy.

LXII.

God save the King and bless the land,
With plenty, joy and peace ;
And grant henceforth that foul debate,
'Twixt noblemen may cease.

T H E E N D.

HARDYKNUTE:

A

FRAGMENT.

I.

STATELY stept he East the wall,
And stately stept he West:
Full seventy years he now had seen,
With scarce seven years of rest.
He liv'd when Britons breach of faith
Wrought Scotland meikle woe:
But ay his sword told to their cost
He was their deadly foe.

II.

High on a hill his castle stood,
With halls and tow'rs a-height,
And goodly chambers, fair to see,
Where he lodg'd many a Knight.
His dame, so peerless once and fair
For chaste and beauty deem'd,
No marrow had in all the land,
Save Eleonor the Queen.

III.

Full thirteen sons to him she bore,
All men of valour stout.

In bloody fight with sword in hand
 Nine lost their lives bot doubt.
 Four yet remain; long may they live
 To stand by liege and land.
 High was their fame, high was their might,
 And high was their command.

IV.

Great love they bore to Fairly Fair,
 Their sister soft and dear.
 Her girdle shew'd her middle jimp,
 And gowden glist her hair.
 What woeful woe her beauty bred !
 Woeful to young and old !
 Woeful, I trow, to kyth and kin,
 As story ever told !

V

The King of Norse in summer tide,
 Puff'd up with pow'r and might,

The King of Norse.] History relates, that soon after the middle of the 10th century, Hago Prince of Norway and Helrick Prince of Denmark invaded Scotland with a mighty fleet; and, landing in the North, ravaged the country in a furious manner. Indulfus King of Scotland, raising an army with great expedition, and coming upon them almost before they were apprized of his march, gave them an entire overthrow, but was himself kill'd in the pursuit. Several circumstances make me think that our author has an eye to this story

Landed in fair Scotland the isle
With many a hardy Knight.
The tidings to our good Scots King
Came as he sat at dine,
With noble chiefs in brave array,
Drinking the blood-red wine.

VI.

“ To horse, to horse, my royal liege,
“ Your foes stand on the strand,
“ Full twenty thousand glittering spears
“ The King of Norse commands.
“ Bring me my steed Mage dapple gray,
The good King rose and cry’d.
“ A trustier beast in all the land
“ A Scots King never sey’d,

VII.

“ Go, little page, tell Hardyknute,
“ That lives on hill so high,
“ To draw his sword, the dread of foes,
“ And haste and follow me.”
The little page flew swift as dart
Flung by his master’s arm.
“ Come down, come down, Lord Hardyknute,
“ And rid your King from harm.

VIII.

Then red, red grew his dark-brown cheeks;
So did his dark-brown brow:

His looks grew keen, as they were wont
 In dangers great to do,
 He has ta'en a horn as green as grass,
 And giv'n five sounds so shrill,
 That trees in Green-wood shook thereat;
 So loud rung ev'ry hill.

IX.

His sons in manly sport and glee
 Had past the summer's morn,
 When lo, down in a grassy dale,
 They heard their father's horn.
 "That horn, said they, ne'er sounds in peace;
 "We've other sport to bide;"
 And soon they hy'd them up the hill,
 And soon were by his side.

X.

"Late, late yestreen I ween'd in peace
 "To end my lenthen'd life.

He has ta'en.] This tense, which our old English poets, Spenser particularly, make frequent use of, has a remarkable effect in placing us near to the action describ'd.

Late, late yestreen.] The lofty sentiment with which Hardyknute begins his speech is extremely remarkable. Ambition and love of glory had now ceas'd to disturb the tranquillity of his age: but zeal for his country, that true, that everlasting passion of an heroic mind, continues to burn with undiminished fierceness. This single motive rouses the venerable chief to arms, and inspires the hoary Patriot with a youthful alacrity.

“ My age might well excuse my arm
“ From manly feats of strife :
“ But now that Norse does proudly boast
“ Fair Scotland to intral,
“ It’s ne’er be said of Hardyknute,
“ He fear’d to fight or fall.

XI.

“ Robin of Rothsay bend thy bow ;
“ Thine arrows shoot so leil,
“ Many a comely countenance
“ They’ve turn’d to deadly pale.
“ Brade Thomas, take you but your lance,
“ You need no weapons mair,
“ If you fight wi’t as you did once
“ ’Gainst Westmorland’s fierce heir.

XII.

“ Malcolm light of foot as stag,
“ That runs in forest wild,
“ Get me my thousands three of men,
“ Well bred to sword and shield.
“ Get me my horse and harnifine,
“ My blade of metal clear :

Robin of Rothsay bend.] It is observable, that while Hardyknute, in this and the following stanza, directs his speech to his sons one after another, and wakes their martial fury, he praises their different excellencies, weapons and atchievements, and thereby shews them what particular services their country expected at their hands. His animated exhortation to the eldest breaks out like a sudden flash of fire.

“ If foes ken’d but the hand it bore,

“ They soon had fled for fear.

XIII.

“ Farewell my dame, so peerless good,

And took her by the hand;

“ Fairer to me in age you seem

“ Than Maids for beauty fam’d:

“ My youngest son shall here remain

“ To guard these stately tow’rs;

“ And shut the silver bolt that keeps

“ So fast your painted bow’rs.

XIV.

And first she wet her comely cheeks,

And then her boddice green,

Her filken cords of twirtle twilt,

Well plet with silver Scheen;

And apron set with many a dice

Of needle-work so rare,

Wove by no hand, as you may guess,

But that of Fairly Fair.

Farewel my dame.] The domestic Hero shines in this stanza. Hardyknute’s kind discourse to his wife, the tender and affectionate leave that he takes of her, and his care in appointing his youngest son to defend her in his absence, are beautiful strokes, which add much to the greatness and dignity of his character.

XV.

And he has ridden o'er muir and mofs,
 O'er hills and many a glen,
 When he came to a wounded Knight,
 Making a heavy mane.

“ Here must I lie, here must I die,
 “ By treachery's false guiles :
 “ Witless I was that e'er gave faith
 “ To wicked woman's Smiles.

XVI.

“ Sir Knight, if you were in my bow'r,
 “ To lean on filken feat,

E

When he came to a wounded Knight.] This episode; or rather a beginning of an episode, which has no connection with the rest of the piece, as things now stand, evidently shews that our author had a more extensive plan in view. It does not appear what he propos'd to make of his wounded and disconsolate lover; but we must surely think that in the design of his work he had cut out a necessary part for him, and would, as it were, have piec'd his adventures to the web of the principal story.

Sir Knight.] This episode is of no small use in one respect; as it serves to raise Hardyknute's compassion, and thereby to give us a lively picture of his great humanity. What he says to the wounded Knight, and the concern he feels for that unhappy stranger, are proofs of a disposition not less requisite in the make of a complete Hero than courage itself. Terence puts the following words in the mouth of a plain honest man;

" My Lady's kindly care you'd prove,
 " Who ne'er ken'd deadly hate :
 " Herself would watch you all the day,
 " Her maids a-dead of night,
 " And Fairly Fair your heart would chear,
 " As she stands in your fight.

XVII.

" Arise, young Knight, and mount your steed
 " Full lowns the shining day ;
 " Chuse from my menzie whom you please
 " To lead you on the way."
 With smileless look and visage wan
 The wounded knight reply'd :
 " Kind chieftain, your Intent pursue,
 " For here I must abide.

XVIII.

" To me no after-day nor night
 " Can e'er be sweet and fair,
 " But soon beneath some dropping tree
 " Cold death shall end my care."
 With him no pleading might prevail :
 Brave Hardyknute to gain
 With fairest words and reason strong,
 Strove courteously in vain.

but the sentiment is such, as would have heighten'd the most
 sublime character in the Iliad :

Homo sum : humani nihil a me alienum puto.

XIX.

Syne he has gone far 'hind attowre
 Lord Chattan's land so wide :
 That Lord a worthy wight was ay
 When foes his courage sey'd :
 Of Pictish race by mother's side,
 When Picts rul'd Caledon,
 Lord Chattan claim'd the princely maid,
 When he sav'd Pictish crown.

XX.

Now with his fierce and stalwart train
 He reach'd a rising height,
 Where broad encamped on the dale,
 Norse' army lay in fight,
 " Yonder, my valiant sons and fierce,
 " Our raging revers wait,
 " On the unconquer'd Scottish fwaird
 To try with us their fate.

Syne he has gone.] As this stanza contains a long encomium upon Lord Chattan, whose name I do not remember to have found mention'd in history, we may reasonably conclude that our author had some tradition in his view. Such digressions are frequent in Homer, and have doubtless a very good effect in a copious writer like him : but they do not suit so well with our author's characteristic brevity. We may therefore suppose that he did not rashly make this excursion from his subject. Perhaps he design'd it as a compliment to some old and illustrious family, which traced their original from such a Pictish Extraction.

XXI.

“ Make Orifons to him that fav’d
 “ Our souls upon the rood,
 “ Syne bravely shew your veins are fill’d
 “ With Caledonian blood.”

Then furth he drew his trusty glaive,
 While thousands all around,
 Drawn from their sheaths, glanc’d in the sun,
 And loud the bougils found.

XXII.

To join his King a-down the hill
 In haste his march he made ;
 While playing pibroch minstrals meet,
 Before him stately ströde.
 “ Thrice welcome valiant stoup of weir,
 “ Thy nation’s shield and pride,
 “ Thy King no reason has to fear
 “ When thou art by his side.

Make orifons.] Our author chuses a proper place and opportunity for intimating the devotion and piety of his Hero. Nought but this was wanting to the perfection of his character.

Thrice welcome.] There is much dignity in the praise which the King bestows upon Hardyknute; and great fire as well as beauty in the metaphors which he makes use of, calling him the pillar of war, and the shield and boast of his country.

XXIII.

When bows were bent and darts were thrown,
For throng scarce could they fly,
The Darts clove arrows as they met,
The arrows dart the tree.

Long did they rage and fight full fierce
With little skaith to man ;
But bloody, bloody was the field
E'er that long day was done,

XXIV.

The King of Scots who findle brook'd
The war that look'd like play,
Drew his broad sword, and broke his bow,
Since bows seem'd but delay.
Quoth noble Rothsay, " mine I'll keep ;
" I wot it's bleed a score.
" Haste up, my merrymen," cry'd the King,
As he rod on before.

XXV.

The King of Norfe he fought to find,
With him to menſe the faught ;

The King of Scots.] The King's conduct on this occasion, is extremely ſuitable to the greatneſs of his rank and courage. Impatient of delay, he breaks his bow with ſcorn and rounzes the tempeſtuous war of the ſword by his ſpeech and example.

The king of Norfe he fought.] We have here a further inſtance of his regal magnanimity. Diſdaining to pollute his hands with ignoble ſlaughter, he tries to find an antagoniſt worthy of himſelf.

But on his forehead there did light

A sharp unsonfy shaft.

As he his hand put up to find

The wound, an arrow keen,

O woeful Chance! there pinn'd his hand

In midst between his een.

XXVI.

"Revenge, revenge, cry'd Rothsay's heir:

"Your mail coat shall nought 'bide

"The strength and sharpness of my dart:

Then sent it thro' his side.

Another arrow well he mark'd,

It pierc'd his neck in twa,

His hands then quit the silver reins,

He low as eard did fa'.

XXVII.

"Sore bleeds my Liege, fore, fore he bleeds."

Again with might he drew

And gesture dread his sturdy bow,

Fast the broad arrow flew.

Woe to the Knight he ettled at;

Lament now Queen Elgreed;

Hydames to wail your darling's fall,

His youth and comely meed.

XXVIII.

'Take off, take off his costly jupe

(Of gold well was it twin'd,

Knit like the fowler's net, through which
His steely harness shin'd.)

"Take Norse that gift from me, and bid

"Him venge the blood it bears;

"Say if he face my bended bow,

"No weapon sure he fears.

XXIX.

Proud Norse with giant body tall,

Broad Shoulder and Armstrong,

Cry'd, "Where is Hardyknute so fam'd

"And fear'd at Britain's throne.

"Tho' Britons tremble at his name,

"I soon shall make him wail,

"That e'er my sword was made so sharp

"So soft his coat of mail."

XXX.

That brag his stout heart could not bide,

It lent him youthful might:

"I'm Hardyknute: this day, he cry'd,

"To Scotland's King I height:

"To lay thee low as horse's hoof,

"My word I mean to keep."

Syne with the first stroke that he struck,

He garr'd his body bleed.

[To lay thee low.] Such an expression is very fit to be made
use of in the field of battle.

XXXI.

Norse' een like gray gose-hawks star'd wild,
 He sigh'd with shame and spite :
 " Disgrac'd is now my far-fam'd arm
 " That left thee power to strike :"
 Then gave his head a blow so fell,
 It made him down to stoop,
 As low as he to ladies us'd
 In courtly guise to loot.

XXXII.

Full soon he rais'd his bent body,
 His bow he marvell'd fair,
 Since blows till then on him but dar'd
 As touch of Fairly Fair.

He sigh'd with shame.] Satan's behaviour upon the foil which he receiv'd in a single combat, may be look'd upon as a direct parallel to the King of Norway's here. How beautifully does Milton represent his infernal hero :

Gnashing with anguish, and despite, and shame,
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke! -----

It must nevertheless be own'd, that the speech which our author puts into the mouth of his warrior, animates the thing above the power of mere description.

As low as ladies.] Our author's description here would have done very well in a mock poem, but is altogether unsuitable to the lofty strain of Hardyknute.

Norse ferly'd too 'as much as he
 To see his stately look,
 So soon as e'er he struck a foe,
 So soon his life he took.

XXXIII.

Where like a fire to heather set
 Bold Thomas did advance,
 A sturdy foe with look enrag'd
 Up towards him did prance.
 He spur'd his steed thro' thickest ranks
 The hardy youth to quell,
 Who stood unmus'd at his approach
 His fury to repel.

XXXIV.

"That short brown shaft so meanly trim'd
 "Looks like poor Scotland's gear,
 "But dreadful seems the trusty point!"
 And loud he laugh'd in jeer.

F

So soon as e'er he struck.] Doubtless this, when apply'd to the King of Norway, is extremely proper and well-tim'd, since it not only represents him as a dreadful warrior, but likewise naturally accounts for his being surpriz'd at Hardy-knute's not sinking under the weight of his blow.

That short brown shaft,] The sarcastic speech of the Norwegian Knight is surely not inferior to any that we meet with in Homer or Virgil. His loud laughter on this occasion shews a wonderful unconcern and presence of mind in the field of

“ Oft Britain’s blood has dim’d its shine,
 “ This point cut short their vaunt;”
 Sync pierc’d the boaster’s bearded cheek,
 No time he took to taunt.

XXXV.

Short while he in his saddle swung,
 His stirrup was no stay,
 So feeble hung his unbent knee,
 Sure taken he was fey:
 Swith on the hardened clay he fell,
 Right far was heard the thud,
 But Thomas look’d not as he lay
 All weltring in his blood.

XXXVI.

With careless gesture, mind unmov’d,
 On rid he north the plain,
 His seem in throng of fiercest strife,
 When winner, ay the same;
 Nor yet his heart dame’s dimpled cheek,
 Could meise soft love to brook,
 Till vengeful Ann return’d his scorn,
 Then languid grew his look.

XXXVII.

In throws of death, with wallow’d cheek,
 All panting on the plain,

battle. But nothing comes up to that sublime and heroic answer which his contemptuous sneer upon the rusty point of his adversary’s weapon produces.

The fainting corps of warriors lay,

Ne'er to arise again:

Ne'er to return to native land,

No more with blythsome sounds,

To boast the glories of the day,

And shew their shining wounds.

XXXVIII.

On Norway's coast the widow'd dame

May wash the rocks with tears,

May long look o'er the shipless seas,

Before her mate appears.

Cease, Emma, cease to hope in vain,

Thy Lord lies in the clay,

The valiant Scots no revers thole

To carry life away.

XXXIX.

There on a plain where stands a cross,

Set up for monument,

Thousands full fierce that summer's day

Fill'd keen war's black intent.

Let Scots, while Scots, praise Hardyknute,

Let Norse his Name ay dread.

Ay how he fought, oft how he spar'd

Shall latest ages read.

XL.

Loud and chill blew the westlin wind,

Sore beat the heavy show'r;

PR
3757
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32

HARDYKNUTE.

Mirk grew the night e'er Hardyknute
Won near his stately tow'r.
His tow'r that us'd with torches blaze,
To shine so far at night,
Seem'd now as black as mourning weed,
No marvel fore he sigh'd.

XLI.

There's no light in my lady's bow'r,
There's no light in my hall;
No blink shines round my Fairly Fair,
Nor ward stands on my wall.
"What bodes it? Robert, Thomas say."
No answer fits their dread.
"Stand back my sons, I'll be your guide:"
But by they pass with speed.

XLII.

"As fast I've sped o'er Scotland's foes."—
There ceas'd his brag of weir;
Sore 'sham'd to mind ought but his dame
And maiden Fairly Fair.
Black fear he felt, but what to fear
He wist not yet with dread;
Sore shook his body, fore his limbs,
And all the warrior fled.

* * * * *

THE END.

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